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IN MEMORIAM: WASHINGTON MATTHEWS.

To the many losses suffered by this Society is to be added the beloved name of Washington Matthews, who passed away in Washington, D. C., April 19, at the age of sixty-two.

Dr. Matthews was born in Killiney, a suburb of Dublin, Ireland, July 17, 1843. In infancy he lost his mother, and was brought to America by his father, a physician, who settled at first in Wisconsin (still a territory), and afterwards in Iowa. In 1860 the young man undertook the study of medicine, and in 1863 received a medical degree from the State University at Dubuque. In the same year he entered the United States service, and through the remainder of the civil war did duty as acting assistant surgeon. In 1868 he was commissioned as assistant surgeon, in 1871 captain and assistant surgeon, in 1889 major and surgeon. In 1865 he served as post surgeon at Fort Union, Montana, and about this time became interested in the study of Indian tribes, for which he had opportunities at various posts, coming into contact with the Arickarees, Hidatsas, and Mandans. In 1871, at Fort Buford, his quarters and all his manuscripts were consumed by fire. In 1872 he published in New York a "Grammar and Dictionary of the Hidatsas," of which a second edition, entitled "Ethnography and Philology of the Hidatsa Indians," was issued from the Government Printing Office in 1877. For the five succeeding years he was employed in California, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington, particularly in campaigns against hostile Indians. In 1880 he went to New Mexico, where he became intimately acquainted with the Navahos. During the subsequent time he made his home in Washington, and in his latter years became subject to painful infirmities, especially lameness and deafness, difficulties trying to an active temperament, but which he endured not merely with resignation, but with the most exemplary courage and equanimity.

Dr. Matthews was a member of this Society from the year of its organization (1888). He was elected vice-president in 1894, and president in 1895. To this Journal he has contributed several articles: "Noqoilpi, the Gambler, a Navajo Myth," 1889, ii. 89; "The Gentile System of the Navajo Indians," 1890, iii. 89; "The Study of Ceremony," 1896, x. 257; "The Study of Ethics among the Lower Races," 1899, xii. 1. His "Navaho Legends" made the fifth volume of the *Memoirs of the Society* (1897). Here may also be mentioned papers entitled: "A Part of the Navajo's Mythology," *American Antiquarian*, April, 1883; "The Mountain Chant, a Navajo Ceremony," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*,

1887 (noticed in this Journal, ii. 76); "Prayer of a Navajo Shaman," *American Anthropologist*, April, 1888 (i. 166); and his complete account of the "Night Chant," *American Museum of Natural History Memoirs*, vol. vi. 1902 (reviewed in this Journal, xvi. 61).

The writings of Dr. Matthews represent the new method in the study of aboriginal mythology, according to which legends are treated, no longer as mere curious tales, but as an essential part of the racial life, illustrated and interpreted by abundant notes and illustrations. It has been said that "Navaho Legends" was the best tribal study of the sort made; nor to this day can it be affirmed that the corresponding material of other continents has been edited in a matter equally satisfactory. Among minor papers may especially be mentioned the beautiful "Study of Ethics" above noted; this article, translated in "*L'Humanité Nouvelle*," dealing with a field still imperfectly explored, finely shows the intimate relations existing between the author and the race with which he deals. Seldom has it happened that any investigator has brought to his task so valuable a combination of qualities, or been equally able to penetrate the mentality he examines. When we consider his career, regret mingles with admiration; had he been assisted with the necessary means, he might have perfected the study of Navaho thought and accomplished an equally brilliant account of Mandan beliefs. For the lack of such perception, a chapter of mental history, to the end of time, will exhibit sad lacunas. Yet the gifts of the gods are usually recognized too late, and it is well to rejoice in what we possess.

If the private life of Dr. Matthews could be fully set forth, it might be judged to outweigh even his public services. Delightful simplicity and frankness, combined with such knowledge of the world and extensive acquaintance as an active experience must needs bestow, gentleness and compassion united to fearless courage, a shrinking modesty unaffected by the intimacy with primitive life, joined to accuracy and clarified by knowledge, aversion to vulgar publicity not exclusive of pleasure in the recognition of worthy praise; a broad and massive nature, neither desiccated by erudition nor hardened by experience; a character which, had its light chanced to have set on an eminence, might have illuminated a whole community.

Dr. Matthews was poet as well as artist; the quality of his verse reflects delicacy and tenderness. It is to be hoped that Mr. Loomis, who is to prepare a biographical account,¹ will include at least some of his few pieces. Before the writer of this inadequate tribute lies one such composition, from which an extract may properly be added.

¹ A preliminary notice has already appeared in *Out West*, May, 1905. *Physicians and Surgeons of America* also furnishes a "Biographical Sketch" to which the writer is indebted for facts and dates.

Its title is "The Pagan Martyrs;" the author describes a visit to the mesa of Zuñi, ascent to its terraces, entrance into the estufa in which are intoning

learned priests who hold
A law as ancient as the code Mosaic,
A cult as that of Baal or Indra old,

notes the arrival of the Spaniards, with ensuing persecutions, and proceeds :—

So, not for images with pallid faces
Would Zuñi's sons their swarthy gods despise,
Nor take the proffered bargain which replaces,
With feast of saint, a day of pagan rite, —
(Such saint as they of Acoma believe in;
For there the Indian sings his song of praise,
Where the fair statue of the Royal Stephen
Supplants the war-god of the ancient days).

Though well they knew the doom of death was meted
To him who in idolatry was found,
They oft, in stealth, to deserts far retreated,
Or met in Nature's temples underground;
And there they taught their children tales of wonder,
And all the secrets of the priestly line;
On high Toyálani, the Mount of Thunder,
They laid the gifts at Ahayùta's shrine.

But Faith, long suffering, is at last victorious;
And praise, to-day, to old-time gods they sing,
No more in trembling, but with voice uproarious,
Safe 'neath the shelter of the Eagle's wing.
Bright are the fires in the *estufas* lowly,
Quenched are the tapers in the Christian fane,
Where now the stranger spoils the altar holy,
No longer guarded by the arms of Spain.

W. W. N.